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833 course simply to please their parents; or so that the husband will not be suspected of impotence by his watchful relatives; or so that his parents may not accuse the girl of being barren; or, when one of them does want intercourse, the other does it merely to oblige. Pub-
[208] lic opinion is an important factor in sexual relations, and it must if possible be satisfied by a pregnancy. If a couple have no children
842 a divorce may be forced upon them after a while, even if neither
586 of them wants that. When a couple have no children outsiders start
208 asking their parents, "What is the matter with them?" Interestingly, loose talk of this sort will be directed towards the childless husband before people — primarily his parents — begin to attach any blame to the girl.

833 Older couples who have several children continue to engage in
887 coitus either for pleasure or out of habit, I was told. Men may con-
886 tinue into old age, perhaps performing the act no more than once a month; but women tend to lose interest once menopause has set in, and are often not in the best of health by that time. A small mino-
587 rity of widowers decide they have the strength to remarry and provided they are wealthy enough to support another wife may intimate this interest to a male friend of equal age. He will tell the old man's sons and daughters about the idea, and these children will then look around for a new stepmother. This however will only occur after they have tested the old man's capabilities. One test is to have some-
[514] one observe him when he urinates: it must be noted whether the flow
[827] of urine was strong enough to make a slight hole in the mud, which would be taken as an indication of suitable strength. A further test might involve the wife of his younger brother. She would be deputed
587 to catch him somewhere privately where she might suggest particular
835 women for him, or even go so far as to assay his capabilities herself. Such an affair would be impermissible if the old man were related as a "husband's father" to her — albeit a classificatory one. But otherwise, provided the affair were handled with discretion, it would be quite acceptable for her to have relations with a husband's brother. Furthermore "it is quite common for a widow to marry her
587 brother-in-law" ("Miles" 1933: 74). In the past a wealthy old widower
833 might ask a younger man to find him a wife. If successful in this he would probably locate a young but barren woman, who might well complain right away that such an old man could not satisfy her. This dilemma was sometimes overcome when the go-between undertook to satisfy the woman provided she married his older friend.

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gingly of the elderly: "After becoming aged one's greed increases;" more sarcastic ones on the same theme are these: "As greed increases, the lifetime lessens," "As mist catches onto a peak, so her vilest characteristics catch hold of an old woman," and again, "Is it medicine for old age, like advice for a bad time?" This latter one refers to the belief that there is no further need for medicine when a person is old, just as a bad man is beyond need of advice. (The general world for all kinds of medicine, *maddu*, is used in this last proverb; it also means "magical potion," "opium" and "poison," however).

9.2. The general attitude towards adult women is not a charitable one: it is succinctly summed up in the saying, "The man knows the nature of others; his wife is an expert in cooking." In contrast to this, though, the status of women is never higher than in old age, and in a few cases old ladies have been members of the otherwise all-male village councils. The Lingayat Badagas in fact treat a post-menopausal woman as a man; but most Badagas do not, for if orthodox they still prohibit an old woman from eating or drinking in the inner and most sacred parts of the house. No ceremonies mark the occurrence of menopause; but Lingayat women are often given a *Linga* symbol to wear after it has occurred.

9.3. Older people have friends in their own village, but not elsewhere because of the difficulty they have in getting around. They select friends of equal age, and hence similar memories; but whether or not the friends are equally well-to-do seems unimportant. A pair of widows or else a pair of widowers are commonly good friends; and provided they are very old, even a widow and a widower can be close friends, treating each other as fictive brother and sister, without other villagers misinterpreting the relationship. Again, if they are extremely elderly, two men and their two wives may treat each other as *four* brothers. Then there is nothing scandalous about an old man sitting with the wife of his friend and talking to her for hours. In contrast with this, an old man with a young wife will not be particularly friendly with another old man whose wife is elderly.

9.4. It is believed that if a man wears gold his lifetime will lengthen. If on the other hand he sees two crows in the act of sexual congress, he will die within a year. An elderly man receives this information calmly; but a younger man will try to avoid his fate by counteracting the omen. This is done by going to a hill above a neighbouring hamlet, and shouting out to the villagers that he—mentioning himself by name—is dead. As he is careful that no one